



**Date:** May 2, 2023  
**To:** Project Files  
**From:** Townscape, Inc.  
**Re:** Pololū Trailhead Planning – Community Meeting #1 via ZOOM

**Meeting Attendees:** Meeting attendees were asked to sign-in via a Google Form. Only 13 participants signed-in, but approximately 22 participants joined the meeting online or called in by phone. Participants from the consultant team included Gabrielle Sham and Rachel Kapule (Townscape, Inc.). The State Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) staff (Jackson Bauer and Steve Bergfeld) also attended the meeting.

This memo documents the community meeting held on Tuesday, May 2, 2023 via Zoom for the Pololū Trailhead Planning project. Similar to the in-person meeting held on Thursday, April 27, 2023 at the North Kohala Intergenerational Center, the purpose of this virtual meeting was to share a draft vision and issues for the trailhead and gather input from the community on potential solutions to address these issues.

Gabrielle Sham started the meeting at 5:00 p.m. She and Ms. Kapule provided a [slideshow](#) presentation that introduced the project and shared the draft vision and issues. A recording of the meeting is available [online](#).

Questions and/or comments from participants are provided below. Responses provided after the meeting are shown in *red*.

- Well, let's see. I'm a longtime resident of Kohala. I built my house here in 1977. I've been going down to Poloū, quite regularly since the early years I used to see Hamo down there a lot who was a gentleman who lived in the area who's not with us anymore. In the last year I've been going down there a whole lot because it's very good exercise for me. I find that the people at the top, your hosts, who are taking care of the parking and they're keeping things quite orderly. I'm going down almost all the time between nine in the morning and noon. And it's very not crowded at nine in the morning when I go down. When I'm coming back up, there's a lot of people coming down so I can see what you're talking about with crowds. Just a couple of things brought forward on the safety going down, I have not seen any real problems. But it does seem like the after rain where it's slippery it's obviously especially difficult, especially right at the beginning of the trail where it's just sort of smooth, compacted dirt, so if some kind of a better gripping surface could be in place for just like the first 30 or 40 yards that would be helpful. I find the people, the tourists, who come quite respectful. I picked up a little bit of litter but very little littering going on. One of the things that does concern me is I numerous times have seen people come down with small children and they have the small children play in the water of the little pond in there which I feel has got to be dangerous health wise because of the stagnancy and pigs and cows around. There are a couple old bulls I've seen around in the last six months, but

they are so old and they have no energy in them for even moving out of the way or doing anything. So that doesn't seem a problem. There have been a few dogs I've seen down there. And that can be an issue if the monk seals are on a beach. But that is very infrequent and I've seen monk seals there a couple of times. I think the real issue an overall perspective is you know visitors and locals. I'm certainly a local by now but generally there's always that trade off and that issue about how much do you want to share with visitors and how do you make that? So I don't have anything new to say to that respect. It's clearly a valid issue that has to be resolved in some way and of course, Cherri Sproat and those who live up there should have a lot of say about whatever you do. I also feel like the imperative I've kept over all these years is we don't want any tour buses out there and so if there's no way of restricting on the roads, then if you make an easy turnaround that would be kind of an opening. I think it's very important to be sure that that doesn't happen. I guess I've said enough. Thank you.

- I live on a farm on the way to Pololū. And I think that one thing that you guys did not address is the traffic, you know, the going into Pololū. The roads are very small and it's very wavy. And it's really quite dangerous and people drive really fast. I don't know if you guys can do anything about that. But it is a big concern for the community. I used to run towards Pololū on a regular basis and I no longer do that because I don't want to get run over by cars, you know. And we've seen a big increase in traffic on the road. So that's a big concern. Just thought I'd throw that out there.

Yeah, well, in addition to everything else that you have already captured, you know, the lack of infrastructure at the trailhead. You know, you guys need to consider the safety of the traffic getting there. You know, the condition of the roads, it's very small. And there was an accident the other day where, you know, I think the cars ran into each other because, you know, they were going too fast and they didn't make the turn or something like that. I mean, it's very dangerous.

- I just want to touch up on what she said because I live right down where the road forks to Pololū and Kēōkea, just where Waikāne and Niuli'i bridge. It's probably one of the most unsafe place to try to have traffic merge through that, you know, really got to take in consideration the roads as the woman said, because, yeah, you can do everything you want to do for make changes at Pololū but it's getting there. And what she said it's true. There's going to be a lot more accidents. And not only that, you got bicyclists coming up and bicyclists company. You know, I get it. It's a tour guide. But a lot of it is unsafe. And so, you know blind spots are probably the worst thing can happen with the drivers here. And if this is going to be exposed out that this development is happening, and more people coming in, not only will accidents occur more often but I fear that families who live in there going to be affected not because of the cars parking anything, but if they got children. You know if something happened, who's going to be responsible? You know, and I get it safety's first, the family's got to watch the children. But you've got to consider these roads. No, no, this is my opinion. We're not designed to hold big traffic. It is not okay. And I think that living here now over the last 33 years you know, just trying to park my truck down to get to my carport. You know, it's you got to wait for a lot of tourists to pass over or locals to pass

before I can do anything to park my car. So I just thought that, you know, that's something that got to consider.

- Hello everyone. I've been living on island since 2002. I actually live in Kona, so I don't live in Kohala. But I go to Pololū really regularly because it's shaded and it's a long trail and I have a dog so I really appreciate that I can get exercise and my dog can get exercise. I hear the community's concerns. But I guess I'm just concerned because there are very few trails of any length that you can actually kind of get exercise on. So Pololū is one of my favorite places to be. It seems to me maybe you could put in a shuttle service from I don't know, grocery store, kind of some common hub and hope that might be a solution to increased traffic or a composting toilet for sanitation. I also went there last week, and I met the stewards, they were amazing. But I do notice that when people are kind of parking on the side of the road, there's a lot of people walking through the road and if you're kind of coming in and trying to turn around, it becomes an issue. So maybe if there was a third steward that could guide people to the end so that they're staying out of walking back and forth through the middle of the road that might be also a good solution. That's all I got.
- So I'm born and raised on O'ahu. And I'm in my 80s and I have seen like a lot of local people over the years, many, many changes. I disliked going to O'ahu and going to my native Pāloalo valley where I was born and raised because of all the changes. What I feel I'm also a kupuna at the national park here. And I have family that are born and raised on this island and I think that Hawai'i Island is kind of like our last hurrah, so to speak. I love it here because of the peace and tranquility and I consider the valleys like Waipi'o on one side of the island and Pololū on the other as being naturally cut off by the roads and by its location. I think that the land is therefore speaking to us and saying you know you need to limit it by the environment that has been naturally created. I believe in managed tourism because I've seen what's happened on O'ahu and I'll just give Hanauma Bay as an example. When I was a kid, we would catch a bus and then we would have to walk a very long way to get to Hanauma Bay. There was no way to get there by bus. And but we could go there freely and we did that. Then it got so ridiculously crowded with no, no rules and you know, people were scattering bread on the water and you've heard all of those. I don't need to go into that but what was created was a terrible environmental situation for the fish for the people that were there and I haven't been there for at least 35 years, which makes me very sad because it was a place that I enjoyed very much. The end of the road in Kaua'i goes to Hanakāpī'ai and the Kalalau trail. And so what happened with all the parking when people were trying to create a situation where they could allow people to go in, enjoy the end of that road the beautiful beaches there. And, uh, you know, I think the county the community in that area took the bull by the horns and literally had to, like our stewards at Pololū are doing right now, was to educate the people to get them not to be parking all over the road because if you were there during that time, it was horrible. People parking on both sides of a very small road. Bicycles and walkers going in between the cars. And I'm an emergency nurse by background. And that just gave me fits because I thought Oh God, and then I look at Sacred Falls and what happened there and the result of that was you know, the State getting sued for the people that were in there not obeying the signs. And really, to me not common sense. We

were not allowed to go there as kids because it was very dangerous. And then you know what happened when they had that big rain and the rain came down and then the water flooded the area. A lot of people got hurt, and then they ended up suing the State. To me, that's just utter stupidity. And so, I think it's our responsibility as adults and I think we should be stewards of our land and protect people from doing stupid things. And you know, I'm not referring to everybody. I'm referring to the few that do stupid things no matter what you tell them and use the guidelines we already have naturally. Like I see the end of the road that's very narrow, I think you should limit the traffic to only those parking spaces. You should have a reservation system like they do in Kaua'i, you have a reservation system. And yeah, it's a sad thing. But you know, if we don't protect our environment, and the beautiful places that we have in Hawai'i, then the footprint will get larger because when you look at economics, economics becomes the driving engine. And, and then it just gets and it appears to me when I look at O'ahu it makes me so sad. And I just heard on the radio this morning about what's happening at Kailua and Kailua Beach and Lanikai. Anyway, I could go on and on and for those of you who have been here a long time, you know of what I speak. So I really believe that the road is narrow, the road is windy, and I think we need to balance people being able to look at our beautiful places with the narrowness of the road, the smallness of the parking lot, talking to people that want to exploit our land and saying no, you can't because you know, then it will allow everybody to enjoy the place. People that are lucky enough to be able to visit it will enjoy it and and keep it controlled and managed, I guess is the right word, that I'm trying to express. I am very sad at what has happened to my island. And I don't want it to happen to my adopted Island, which is this one now. I just don't want it to happen. So anyway, that's my take on it.

- Hi I'm Sarah Pule-Fujii. I am one of the stewards at Pololū. And I just wanted to touch on what [someone] had said about the bikers that bike tours that come up, back roads. The road to Niuli'i is already narrow. It's already with no shoulder. And this they say share the road but the bikers are not sharing the road with us. We have to wait. You know they're going around the turning, we have to wait until we finish the whole turning to get back to the speed that we normally do. These guys should be stopped from coming to Niuli'i and Niuli'i to Pololū. We need to have a solution to stop these guys. The shoulder is not wide enough. They speed, what [he] is talking about, I live across of [him], we have the two bridges with a yield sign. People don't yield. The car is coming down from Pololū, an accident to happen anytime I walk on the road and especially when I'm walking with my grandchildren, I stop and I stare at the vehicles so they get eye to eye contact with me because there's too much traffic we got. We got to limit Pololū. I don't know how we're gonna do it but stop the bikers from coming to Pololū. Thank you.
- Aloha. I grew up on the Big Island in Hōlualoa, lived there about 21 years and Pololū was very special to me. And so I love these ideas that are coming out. I believe that limiting the number of people who come into Pololū is a fantastic idea. There are plenty of parks where I live in Oregon where you have to sign up and you have to sign up six months to a year in advance in order to get some of the spots. Now do I love that I might have to do that anytime I come back and visit where I grew up? No, I don't. But I believe that the place is worth saving and worth keeping as it is. I got to see Kua Bay absolutely destroyed because they paved the way out to it. You give

people easy access to something there, you're going to invite the wrong type of people in, so I loved the registration. I also honestly believe that there should be a day that only Native Hawaiians should be allowed to go maybe a week, this is their place. You know we white people just get to share it. So I strongly believe that Hawai'i should be kept for Hawaiians for kanaka maoli, that's it.

- Aloha mai kākou. I was raised in Kohala. My 'ohana is from Kohala. So as a little girl I used to sleep at Auntie Cherri's house, right there on the lookout. We never really went down in the valley when we were kids. And I do think part of it is because it was, it's very dangerous down there. And the other part is, we knew there's a sacredness to that space. That's what we grew up knowing. And I just wanted to pop on and kāko'o what our kūpuna have said already, and then mention a couple other points or so. I do agree about the road that the road was not built to handle the amount of traffic that is going in and out of there. The other thing I wanted to mention is when the weather is really bad down there. People should not be going there. I know we talked a little bit about when flash floods happen on island that we talked about wanting to close the access to the valley because we all know there's been several rescues down there. Like not just on days where there's really bad weather but also on days where there's good weather. And the other thing I wanted to mention is I know the 'ohana had talked about commercial photography and not wanting commercial photography down there or weddings and that's been kind of a big issue. And the reason why is because we all know that people are going down there because of social media. And once you start, I actually recently went to my cousin's wedding at Waimea Valley. And it broke my heart when I was there because the amount of wedding that they had there that day, it was...it was terrible. I don't want to ever see this valley turn into that. So I mean, I wanted to bring up those two points, the point about closing the valley during flash floods, and also about not allowing commercial photography or weddings down in the valley. I love the valley very much. I'm part of the Protect Pololū hui so most of you who are from Kohala already know me. You probably see me posting a lot of stuff online, or our group but really, I don't live in Kohala right now. But that is where my na'au is. That is where my 'ohana lives. So I do the work that I do from California and I have been home a couple of times. I came home for Auntie Patty Ann's huaka'i, I just wanted to share that mana'o. Mahalo.
- Being at the lookout every day, and when it rains, it's slippery. We see people fall. We need to stop them from going down. And Pololū is a sacred place. When you see visitors come and they're going down with footballs with balls to play down there...my last line to our visitors when I'm giving them my safety speech is, "please remember that this is all a sacred land to us Hawaiian people. So please, have respect for the land." And there are people that I know I have touched their hearts that they will respect but then when you have people that come with footballs and stuff like that, they're not going down there to respect anything. They don't know how special the place is. And if we limit the people, but my wish is not let anybody go down, they can come and visit at the lookout I have no problem with that. But when they going go down, if they have respect for the place because it's so sacred and limit the people. If we have to let them go down, limit the people but we don't have to do any improvements there. Leave it the way it is because 99% of the people who come say they have never seen any place so

beautiful. It's stunning. The most beautiful place on the islands we need to keep it that way.  
Thank you.

- My father led the restoration of Ahu'ena Heiau at Kamakahonu, the capitol site, the kingdom of Hawai'i, personal temple of Kamehameha the Great. The history of the lands of Kohala. If we took a gathering of all the people, 'ōiwi, koko, you're going to find that per capita there's more relationships to all of the lands of Hawai'i than there are the newcomers here. I would like to thank everyone who's testified tonight for I feel the essence of what is important to be said for you. I succeeded my father as kahu of Ahu'ena Heiau and we have had many changes happen recently and at this time I have this to share. Greetings this day. I am Lamakū Mikahala Roy, of Ahu'ena Heiau at Kamakahonu. Kamakahonu is the capitol of the kingdom unified by Kamehameha the Great in 1810. Kamakahonu is the capital of the restored Kingdom of Hawai'i, but Ali'i Nui Mō'ī Edmund K. Paki Silva II, the kahu of Ahu'ena Heiau at the time. Since 2010, we've been receiving sacred spiritual conveniences, guidance from the ancestors, 'ōiwi, we uphold the highest light of Akua at Kamakahonu for the planet. This news has spread throughout Hawai'i populations. In 2021, I sent the attached letter to the legislature of Hawai'i to inform all in the government positions near and far about this amazing truth for Hawai'i and the world. The State DLNR in its representative former chair Ms. Suzanne Case was informed of transitions by spirit. Great historic events at Kamakahonu. As the new chair has been equally updated. Nothing remains the same. Since we have heard from our ancestors. They indicate what most high God guides us guides for us here. Akau declares Hawai'i the kingdom of Akua, or the kingdom of God upon the earth. Akua will guide all of the sacredness that is Hawai'i now and for the future in each and every sacred site known and those from antiquity yet unknown. In 2021, Akua by our ancestors declared a moratorium on development upon some 40 acres of vital coastal lands of Kona from Kaloko in the north to Honaunau in the south. These lands were known as Pu'uokaluaokalani by our forefathers and they are identified collectively today by Akua as the repository of the especially sacred lands of the ages of Akua. What does Akua guide for this application for changes at Pololū? Here is a spiritual convenience that has come and I read it now. Spiritual convenience of ancestors for Akua, Pololū. No modifications to the land for a trailhead are to be planned. All persons wishing to give in service to the lands of Hawai'i at Pololū Valley are to contact the state DLNR who are to communicate with and gain approval from the restored kingdom of Hawai'i. Only po'e kupa o Pololū, those of family descendants of Pololū may access the Pololū trail and enter the valley. All service projects planned by the state are called to be placed on hold until approval is obtained from the offices of the restored Kingdom of Hawai'i, Ali'i Nui Mō'ī Edmund K Paki Silva Jr. E nānā 'ia ka pulapula i ka la'akea i ka lā'aumi. May the descendants be cared for in times of light and times of misfortune. I read to you now a spiritual convenience that came to us beginning in 2010. Leo kualono I named it, voices [?] the mountain top. [?] March 4, 2010 a whale has beached itself upon the shoreline and Pololū Valley. Akua and the ancestors speak of this coming of this great sperm whale. The water brings the wisdom of the Creator bringing wisdom of the kūpuna. Where the animal passes and places itself is important. The whale is at the Pololū shoreline. It's as if it's upon the Pololū Trail and into the sea. The wisdom of the Creator brings us the wisdom of the kūpuna. The whale died for the purpose of saving the wildlife of the ocean. He died

because of the effect of sonar beams that are used by the military. These practices are affecting all wildlife in the oceans. The whale died because it brings us a message to kanaka maoli, messages, stay on the trail of the ancestors. King Kamehameha is speaking to us do not give plans away. The whale has beached itself on the shore in an area that feeds into the Pololū trail. The whale is presently in two parts. The two parts tell of the two divisions we as a people find ourselves in. Some no longer believe in and know the goodness of our Hawaiian life. Their hearts are no longer open to our people's first teaching. Many of us believe in Christianity over our Hawaiian way. The God of the Christians is the same God of our ancestors. The only difference is many do not know who we are. The trail is one, we 'ōiwi are divided. Kanaka maoli come together as one now, do not let the United States divide us. It is our trail. They are our ancestors, when we step off the trail into a field of 'a'ā lava, we are hurt. But if we walk the trail that has been prepared for us, we are safe and we reach our destination. Ceremony this ceremony should take place from 3pm on it is a good thing that children can be a part this time they can be there to honor the koholā. The children are what the efforts of all of our adult lives are about. Our work is to preserve Earth Mother and to teach the wisdom for all life to come. Should the koholā remain upon the land, the bones all such remains shall be saved, harvested for safekeeping for sacred use by kanaka maoli.

- What was the testimony in Kohala? Can you tell us what most people spoke on?
  - *Notes from the in-person community meeting are available [online](#).*
- Anyone on this call should have access to these spiritual conveyances and I hope you make them available.
- There's no place to submit testimony online.
  - *Additional testimony or comments may be submitted at any time here: <https://forms.gle/jACz8F9EYE6V13Uj6>*
- (Chat comment) Aloha, I am attending on behalf of Councilmember Cindy Evans. I have been taking extensive notes since the beginning of this meeting. However, if you would like to reach out, I am attaching our contact information. Email: [cindy.evans@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:cindy.evans@hawaiicounty.gov) Phone: (808)889-6512.
- (Chat comment) Can you guys email your timeline to all attendees please?
  - *A general timeline can be found on our project fact sheet here: [https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/recreation/files/2023/01/Pololu-Trailhead-Planning\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_2023-01-16.pdf](https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/recreation/files/2023/01/Pololu-Trailhead-Planning_Fact_Sheet_2023-01-16.pdf)*

Gabrielle Sham closed the meeting at approximately 6:00 p.m.

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